

REMARKS

Claims 3-14 are pending and under consideration.

On page 3 of the Office Action, claims 3-6 and 8-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,802,361 (Wang) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,564,206 (Ikeda).

According to Wang, a method of searching still images and images contained in video is provided. According to Wang, the method of searching for images relies on the presence in the image of image attributes that describe statistical qualities of the image and that can be mapped to perceptual qualities in the image. See Wang, column 4, lines 41-43 and lines 46-54.

According to Ikeda, an information search apparatus and method is provided that includes query condition input means, storage means, calculation means, display means, and image selection means. The calculation means calculates similarity values between the query condition and the individual image data by comparing the query condition with stored image data. See Ikeda, column 1, lines 51-67 and column 2, lines 1-2.

The present invention is directed to a data search system that displays the grounds for extraction of data (search results) so that a user can easily understand them. A user can select feature values to be given in a subsequent search in data search processing using feature values as a search key. In at least one embodiment, the present invention includes a ground information providing part that provides each data with ground information visualizing the grounds for classification and arrangement of the data at a predetermined position. An example of the ground information is label information representing the information on feature values used for the classification and arrangement. In at least one embodiment of the invention, information on feature values includes information on wavelet conversion feature values. See Specification of the Present Invention, page 8, lines 5-8, lines 11-14, and lines 29-32.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 3, 10, and 11 are patentable over the references, as neither of the references, taken alone or in combination, teaches or suggests, "data having similar feature values are disposed close to each other," as recited in claim 3, for example.

The Examiner admitted that Wang does not disclose that data having similar feature values are disposed close to each other.

In col. 6, lines 33-66, Ikeda describes images having a highest similarity with respect to a search condition are collected and displayed in a concentric center zone 706 and images having

a lower similarity with respect to the search condition are disposed in zones 707, 708 outside of the concentric zone. See FIG. 6. More specifically, the corresponding portion of Ikeda discloses that images are disposed in accordance with "similarity with respect to a search condition."

In contrast, the claim language "data having similar feature values are disposed close to each other," of the present invention, refers to the arrangement in accordance with the similarity of *feature values* of data. Applicants respectfully submit that arrangement in accordance with the similarity of feature values of data is different from arrangement in accordance with similarity with respect to a search condition. That is, in Ikeda, images having highest similarity with respect to a search condition are collected in center zone 706. Thus, the images having a highest similarity with respect to a search condition are "disposed close to each other," while images having a lower similarity with respect to the search condition may be disposed away from each other even if the feature values thereof are similar to each other.

Therefore, the independent claims are patentable over the references. As dependent claims 12, 4-6, 8, and 9 depend from independent claim 3 and dependent claims 13 and 14 depend from claims 10 and 11, respectively, the dependent claims are patentable over the references for at least the reasons presented above for the independent claims.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

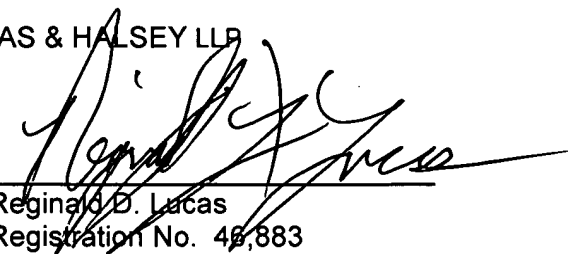
Respectfully submitted,

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9/16/05

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